

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CONAKR 00359 231512Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 TRSE-00 HA-05 /077 W

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FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4032

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

USMISSION USUN NY

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

C O N F I D E N T I A L CONAKRY 0359

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PEPR, SREF, SHUM, GV

SUBJECT: FIRST CONTACT BETWEEN HCR AND GUINEA

1. DR. OTTO HAGENBUCHLE, REGIONAL DELEGATE FOR WEST AFRICA, UN HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES, VISITED CONAKRY ON FEBRUARY 15-22 IN FIRST CONTACT BETWEEN GOG AND HCR FOR MORE THAN DECADE. DAKAR-BASED HAGENBUCHLE WAS CORDIALLY

RECEIVED BY GUINEAN PRESIDENT SEKOU TOURA FOR MORE THAN FOUR HOURS, CLEARLY BENEFITTING FROM AURA OF IMPENDING RECONCILIATION BETWEEN GUINEA, SENEGAL, AND IVORY COAST.

2. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH AMBASSADOR AND DCM FEBRUARY 17 AND 20, HAGENBUCHLE SAID HE HAD THANKED GOG FOR ITS \$516 (SIC) CONTRIBUTION VIA UN TO HCR, INVITED GUINEA TO SEND AN OBSERVER TO HCR'S SESSION NEXT OCTOBER IN GENEVA, INDICATED HCR'S WILLINGNESS TO FIND MATERIAL WAYS TO BE HELPFUL IN REPATRIATION OF GUINEANS ABROAD BACK TO GUINEA UNDER PRESIDENT TOURE'S DECREE OF JULY 1977, AND RECEIVED TOURE'S INVITATION TO OUTGOING HIGH  
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 CONAKR 00359 231512Z

COMMISSIONER TO VISIT GUINEA. TOURE SAID HE WISHED TO BE KEPT INFORMED ALSO OF ANY TRAVEL TO WEST AFRICA BY NEW HIGH COMMISSIONER.

3. HAGENBUCHLE TOLD AMBASSADOR HE HOPES, IN CONTEXT OF SEKOU TOURE'S INITIATIVE TOWARD IVORY COAST AND SENEGAL, THAT HCR CAN SET UP LOW-KEY REPRESENTATION

IN CONAKRY "IF INVITED". PURPOSE WOULD BE TO SEEK TO EASE PROBLEM OF GUINEAN EXILES IN WEST AFRICA BY FACILITATING THEIR RESETTLEMENT IN GUINEA RATHER THAN GIVING THEM CHARITY ABROAD. AMBASSADOR TERMED THIS APPROACH A CONSTRUCTIVE ONE, AND EXPRESSED VIEW THAT HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN GUINEA WOULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT BEARING ON WILLINGNESS OF REFUGEES TO RETURN, AND HCR OFFICE IN CONAKRY SHOULD THEREFORE EXPECT TO TAKE A SPECIAL INTEREST IN THAT AREA. HAGENBUCHLE AGREED, BUT OBSERVED THAT SUCH AN OFFICE, IF ESTABLISHED, WOULD HAVE TO APPROACH THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE CAUTIOUSLY. HCR IS BEGINNING TO THINK NOT ENOUGH HAS BEEN DONE FOR AFRICA'S LARGEST EXILE GROUP (MOST OF WHOM ARE NOT "REFUGEES" AS CLASSICALLY DEFINED), ALTHOUGH HCR MUST TREAD CAREFULLY BECAUSE OF POLITICIZED HISTORY OF GUINEA'S POST-INDEPENDENCE OUTMIGRATION. HAGENBUCHLE NOTED THAT SEKOU TOURE NO LONGER MADE RETURN OF HOSTILE EMIGRES A PREREQUISITE FOR BETTER RELATIONS WITH HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY AND SENGHOR. IN WHAT TURNED OUT TO BE LONG CONVERSATIONS WITH TOURE, HAGENBUCHLE'S IMPRESSION WAS THAT, WHATEVER THE FATE OF PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS AT RECONCILIATIONS, TOURE WAS SERIOUS ABOUT THIS ONE. TOURE, HOWEVER, SEEMED STILL THE PRISONER OF HIS OWN IDEOLOGICAL PAST AND ISOLATION. HAGENBUCHLE THEREFORE FEELS THE RECONCILIATION HAS TO BE CONSIDERED TENTATIVE AND CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CONAKR 00359 231512Z

FRAGILE SO FAR, AND WILL ADVISE HCR NOT TO GET TOO FAR AHEAD OF IT IN ITS OWN PLANS FOR GUINEA. AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED IDEA OF HCR ASSISTANCE IN REPATRIATION PROBLEM MIGHT USEFULLY BE PURSUED THROUGH SENGHOR AND HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY AT FORTHCOMING SUMMIT CONFERENCE. HAGENBUCHLE THOUGHT THPS INTERESTING, BUT SEEMED INCLINED TO TAKE IT SLOWLY, LETTING RESULTS OF THIS FIRST FAVORABLE CONTACT MATURE AND SEEING HOW SUMMIT GOES AND GENERAL SITUATION DEVELOPS OVER COMING YEAR.

4. HAGENBUCHLE INFORMED AMBASSADOR EVENING FEBRUARY 21 HE HAD HAD ANOTHER LONG SESSION AND LUNCH WITH TOURE THAT REINFORCED FAVORABLE ATMOSPHERE OF EARLIER MEETINGS. SESSION HAD ENDED WITH TOURE ASKING HAGENBUCHLE TO CARRY TO SENGHOR THE MESSAGE THAT TOURE'S INITIATIVE AND INTENTIONS REGARDING RECONCILIATION WITH SENEGAL AND IVORY COAST ARE COMPLETELY SINCERE. CROSBY

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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